

of Teachers. They were very skeptical—which I understand, because professionals who are already working in their profession have a right to be skeptical of outsiders who would come in and say we are going to grade you. Even though these teachers are in the business of grading themselves.

I spoke to the American Federation of Teachers. I worked with Mr. Shanker. I even raised taxes in Tennessee. Guess who was against doing what we eventually did? The National Education Association. Their President said we are going to send whatever we need into Tennessee to defeat Alexander's silly ideas, and we fought for a year and a half and finally I won, temporarily, and Tennessee established a career ladder program which eventually attracted 10,000 teachers with 10- or 11-month contracts who volunteered to go up the career ladder to a second or third level. They were called master teachers.

We raised the pay for every teacher by \$1,000, just if they took the basic teacher competency test. That was voluntary, too, but more than 90 percent did it. And 10,000 teachers did. That was quite a number. This was sort of the model T of the teacher compensation plans.

Since then, a lot has happened across the country. Governor Jim Hunt and others, with the support of the teachers unions, have developed the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards Certified Teacher Program, which is one way of certifying a biology teacher in the same way you would certify an orthopedic doctor. This is helpful if you are on the school board in Providence, you can say: I don't have the means to evaluate if this teacher is better than that teacher, but if you are a board certified teacher we will pay you \$10,000 more a year. That has worked pretty well. Some places around the country have found ways to do that, but it is not possible for a school board in the town to take on the whole mixture of difficulties that go with a fair way to reward teachers.

We did it in 1983 and 1984, and we had to create a panel of teachers who were outside the district of the teacher who wanted to be a master teacher to avoid politics. We made sure one of those teachers was of that same subject. If it was an eighth grade U.S. history teacher, then somebody on the panel was an eighth grade U.S. history teacher. Principal evaluations were part of it and a teacher portfolio was part of it.

One thing we did not know how to do then and we are just beginning to understand in our country is how to measure student achievement. Our common sense says a teacher makes a big difference, but how do we measure it? The challenge, as we work on schools that need help, is how do we make sure they have the best teachers and the best school leaders? It is a big challenge, but it is not impossible.

We are learning, after 4 years of No Child Left Behind, that 80 percent of

our schools I would call high-achieving schools are meeting all the adequate yearly progress requirements for No Child Left Behind. That means we have about 20 percent of our schools that aren't. In 5 percent of the schools, they are only behind in one category. So it is only 15 percent of the schools where children are chronically not learning and being left behind. The ugly fact was, before No Child Left Behind, we let that happen.

Now we put the spotlight on it, and we have to do something about it. The best way to do something about it is what? Get a terrific school leader and help him or her be a good principal, move in some tremendous teachers or reward those who are there and keep them teaching. And the National Education Association says kill the program that is the most important Federal program to do that? I don't understand that; I don't understand.

I say to my colleagues in the Senate of both parties, I hope this approach will have unanimous opposition in the Senate. I hope we say we want to reward efforts in Memphis, in New Mexico, DC, Chicago, Denver, Dallas, Houston, Philadelphia, Chattanooga, where they tackle the problem. No, we are not talking about a one-time bonus pay for people, or teacher of the year, who the principal might like. We are talking about a more professional system where we can say talented men and women who are teachers, we like to honor you. We want to work with you in your district to form a way to honor you and raise your pay.

There is one reason I regret having to make this speech, I had a wonderful visit the other day. It came from six or seven members of the Tennessee Education Association. Earl Wiman, Guy Stanley, Paula Brown, Nita Jones, and Kristen Allen came to my office. We visited for a while. I am about to write a handwritten note to Earl Wiman to say how much I appreciated the visit. He was a career ladder teacher, making \$75,000 extra dollars over his tenure. He said "I want to thank you for that." We acknowledged there were problems with the master teacher program we had in Tennessee as there always are when you start up something new. It was a terrific visit from people I greatly respect.

It reminded me, wherever I go in Tennessee, retired teachers or current teachers come up to me and say, thank you for the master teacher program. It paid for my child's education. It honored my work. It raised my retirement pay. It kept me teaching. You would be surprised how many times this happened, so I know this can be done.

But it cannot be done if the largest educational association in America sends out letters such as this threatening Senators with, in effect, writing every teacher in their district, and saying you are a bad Senator because you voted against the NEA legislative report card.

I would give them an F on a letter for another reason. They said that the

Teacher Incentive Fund restricts the use of funds to only two possible uses: merit pay and tenure reform. That is not true, at least not according to the Department of Education. We called over there today. This is what they told me: The Department of Education says the words "tenure" or "merit pay" do not even appear in the application forms. The specific goals of the teacher incentive fund include: one, improving student achievement by increasing teacher and principal effectiveness; two, reforming teacher and principal compensation systems so that teachers and principals are rewarded for increases in student achievement; three, increasing the number of effective teachers teaching minority, poor, and disadvantaged students in hard-to-staff subjects; and finally, creating sustainable, performance-based compensation systems.

Applicants must outline how they will utilize classroom evaluations that are conducted multiple times throughout the school year and provide incentives for educators to take on additional responsibilities and easy leadership roles.

The Department also gives extra points to applications that demonstrate they have support from a significant proportion of teachers, the principal, and community. As I mentioned, in Philadelphia or Denver, that means the teachers' union.

I know in this joint funding resolution it looks as though we are not going to have a chance to amend that. That is why I voted against cloture. I understand that. Both sides of our aisle did not get our work done so we have had to clean it up too quickly this year. The Teacher Incentive Fund took a big hit.

I say earnestly to my colleagues in the Senate, I hope Senators will look at the Teacher Incentive Fund carefully. I hope you will think about what your ideas are for improving schools with low-performing students. I hope you will ask yourself whether what they are doing in Chicago, for example, to move in a new principal and to move in a team of teachers and to train them more and to pay them more might not be one way to do it. If Denver wants to do it this way, and Dallas wants to do it that way, and Philadelphia wants to do it that way, and Mayor CORKER helped Chattanooga do it, why shouldn't we help them?

We don't want the Federal Government to take over the local schools, but clearly one of the appropriate things for the Federal Government to do in support of elementary and secondary education and high school education is to help solve this tough problem of how do we fairly and effectively reward outstanding teaching and outstanding school leadership.

If we don't do this in our current system, we are not going to be able to keep the best men and women in our classrooms, especially in the most difficult classrooms, which is where our